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Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 15 of Security Council resolution 1379 (2001). The report reviews activities and progress made during the reporting period in the protection of children affected by situations of armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, as well as in the implementation of resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000) and 1379 (2001). As requested in paragraph 16 of resolution 1379 (2001), a list of parties to armed conflict that recruit or use children in violation of relevant international obligations, in situations of which the Council is seized, is annexed to this report.

2. The adoption of the document entitled "A world fit for children" (resolution S-27/2, annex) by the General Assembly at its special session on children reflects a renewed commitment to protecting children during armed conflict, in accordance with international humanitarian and human rights law.

II. A strengthened normative framework for the protection of children in armed conflict: moving towards an "era of application"

3. Since the Security Council adopted resolution 1379 (2001), two landmark international instruments have entered into force — the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (12 February 2002) and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1 July 2002). The Optional Protocol sets the age limit for compulsory recruitment and direct participation in hostilities at 18, and requires States parties to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to at least 16. It prohibits insurgent armed groups "under any circumstances" from recruiting persons under 18 years or using them in hostilities. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court provides a mechanism of accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, including crimes specific to children. For example, the Statute classifies conscription, enlistment or use in hostilities of children below the age of 15 as a war crime in both international and internal armed conflicts. The entry into force of these two legal instruments strengthens the international framework for the

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protection of children in situations of armed conflict. The challenge today is in ensuring their implementation on the ground.

4. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict has sought and obtained important commitments for the protection and well-being of children in conflict and post-conflict situations, and for observing obligations under international law, in countries such as Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, the Sudan and others. The Special Representative continues to monitor compliance with these commitments.

5. Many States are making efforts to harmonize their national legislation with relevant international child rights standards. The United Nations stands committed to offering technical and legal assistance to Member States in their efforts directed at applying child rights norms and standards.

6. The Security Council, in its deliberations and resolutions on country or region-specific situations, and on thematic issues, is encouraged to address the child protection recommendations included in my reports and to reflect the standards articulated in Council resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000) and 1379 (2001) and the presidential statement on children and armed conflict (S/PRST/2002/12), the aide-memoire on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/PRST/2002/6, annex) and resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

III. Child protection on the peace and security agenda of the United Nations

7. The reports to the Security Council over the past year have highlighted the plight of children affected by armed conflict. The Council has taken up my recommendations on child protection in several resolutions, including most recently on Angola and Sierra Leone, and in presidential statements. On 8 March 2002, Council members were briefed on the plight of girls affected by armed conflict by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, and took the matter up again on 28 and 29 October in the open debate on women and peace and security.

8. An inter-agency working group, convened jointly by the Office of my Special Representative, UNICEF, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, has prepared draft guidelines on the integration of child protection in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building. These will be submitted for the consideration of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security at the end of the year.

9. I have continued to recommend that child protection be an explicit feature in peacekeeping mandates and, where appropriate, that child protection advisers be deployed in United Nations peace operations. Their role in ensuring the implementation of the child protection dimension of the mandates of peacekeeping operations and advising the head of a peacekeeping mission in a given country is crucial. The Security Council endorsed my recommendations in its resolutions 1314 (2000) and 1379 (2001), and there has been some progress in this area.

10. The Security Council endorsed the creation of a post of child protection adviser in the United Nations Mission in Angola and the adviser was deployed in October. Meanwhile, the Child Protection Units in the United Nations Organization

Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) were strengthened, with eight and two child protection advisers, respectively. I urge the Council to consider the recommendations of the Special Representative to establish such posts in other peace operations.

11. The working group on child protection training for peacekeeping personnel, convened jointly by the office of my Special Representative, UNICEF and Save the Children Sweden, in collaboration with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, has completed a draft set of training materials that can be adapted to the mandate of any peace operation and employed to train military, police and civilian personnel. Efforts are under way to ensure comprehensive child protection training, to supervise staff conduct towards children in mission areas and to educate staff about sanctions that will be applied when appropriate standards of conduct are transgressed.

IV. Progress achieved in implementing Security Council resolutions

12. The resolutions of the Security Council form an integral part of the framework of standards for the protection of children in armed conflict. Progress achieved since my last report to the Council is reported below.

Addressing impunity

13. The Security Council, in resolution 1379 (2001), urged Member States to prosecute those responsible for egregious violations of the rights of children in situations of armed conflict and to exclude those crimes from amnesty provisions, where feasible. The entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court strengthens this objective considerably. Since children are likely to constitute important witnesses within proceedings of the Court, and in accordance with the Rome Statute, the Special Representative has urged that the Court have juvenile justice expertise in both the Prosecutor's office and the Victims and Witnesses Unit. It would be particularly important for the Prosecutor's office to protect the safety, physical and psychological well-being, dignity and privacy of child witnesses and victims when investigating and prosecuting crimes against children.

14. Since the Special Court for Sierra Leone has jurisdiction over specific crimes committed against children, such as child recruitment, as well as over persons who were between 15 and 18 years old at the time of an alleged crime, it is important that the Rules of Evidence and Procedure of the Special Court regulate all aspects of juvenile justice.

Landmines and small arms

15. In more than 80 countries children are at risk from landmines and unexploded ordnance, particularly when fleeing conflict or when returning. Although the Security Council resolutions increasingly include support for mine action programmes, enabling the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and its partners to intervene in a timely way in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kosovo, and Lebanon, among others, much work remains to be done; a major constraint is inadequate resources.

At the conclusion of his visits to areas of conflict, my Special Representative has consistently appealed to the international community to give greater support to mine action, including mine risk education programmes, and to the rehabilitation of child mine victims, including through the provision of prostheses. Child-focused mine risk education and assistance to mine survivors should be incorporated into post-conflict programmes for peace-building, wherever appropriate.

16. Efforts to sever the link between the proliferation and widespread use of small arms and light weapons and the victimization of children both as casualties and agents in armed conflicts have not made notable progress. I urge the international community to focus more attention on this important issue.

Humanitarian access in zones of conflict

17. Denial of humanitarian access by State or non-State actors is a violation of human rights and humanitarian law. Because non-State armed groups may exercise de facto control over areas of territory where population groups are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, negotiating humanitarian access with these armed groups has become integral to the work of humanitarian agencies. A manual is currently being drafted to guide United Nations agencies in their engagement and disengagement in such negotiations.

18. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) have successfully negotiated "days of tranquillity" and national immunization days with parties to conflict, allowing immunization against polio to be carried out in Afghanistan Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and the Sudan, and large-scale measles immunization and provision of vitamin A supplements to be carried out in Afghanistan and Burundi and the quartering areas in Angola. Following the peace agreement in Angola, more than 1 million people living in areas formerly controlled by UNITA forces have become accessible for the first time in three decades and efforts are under way to provide them with humanitarian relief, and to reunite the estimated 100,000 children separated from their families. In northern Uganda and the southern Sudan, humanitarian access to internally displaced populations remains insecure and inconsistent because of armed attacks and constant displacements. In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, my Personal Envoy recently reported that stricter closures, curfews, roadblocks and checkpoints have created humanitarian problems, including frequent school closures and a drop in immunization levels.

Mitigating the impact on children of illicit commercial exploitation of natural resources in conflict zones

19. Only limited progress can be reported towards monitoring compliance with the exhortation in resolution 1379 (2001) that steps be taken to mitigate the impact on children of illicit commercial exploitation of natural resources in conflict zones. In its final report, of 16 October 2002 (S/2002/1146), the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo noted that children are being conscripted and used as forced labour in the extraction of natural resources by a number of military forces.

20. The recent endorsement of the process of certification of "conflict" diamonds in the Kimberly Process by representatives of many Member States and mining and diamond companies, at Interlaken, Switzerland, was an important step towards

reducing conflict and alleviating the plight of children caught up in war fuelled by the illicit exploitation of natural resources.

Displaced children

21. When war displaces families and communities, children often spend their entire childhood in camps where they are at risk of exploitation and forcible recruitment by armed forces or groups. The need to take steps to locate camps and settlements at a reasonable distance from national borders, separate civilians and armed elements, and maintain the humanitarian and civilian character of camps and settlements for refugees and displaced persons was highlighted in my report of 2001 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/2001/331) and in the aide-memoire endorsed by the Security Council in March 2002 (see S/PRST/2002/6). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees remains fully engaged, through its Agenda for Protection, established in 2002, in ensuring that such measures minimize the possibility of abduction, recruitment or exploitation of refugee children, especially those who are unaccompanied or separated from their families and are therefore most at risk.

Addressing the needs of girls

22. In armed conflicts, girls and women are often targeted for rape, abduction, forced recruitment and trafficking, including across borders. Yet programmes specifically for girls are often overlooked during post-conflict reconstruction processes designed to foster rehabilitation, peace and stability, including disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, education and vocational training. More explicitly tailored strategies and adequate resources are needed to ensure that girls receive necessary assistance. After two decades of fighting in Afghanistan, the enrolment of girls in primary school had dropped to 8 per cent. The back-to-school campaign in Afghanistan specifically focused on encouraging girls to return to the classroom.

23. Girls and young women are also present in many of today's fighting forces. The war-related experiences and post-conflict needs of girl soldiers are distinct from those of their male peers, and United Nations programmes are seeking to document and address this. The Child Protection Unit within MONUC is helping to monitor the recruitment of girls and the roles that they play in armed forces and groups. The child protection advisers and the human rights staff of UNAMSIL, together with UNICEF and its implementing partners, are monitoring the reintegration needs of girls associated with the fighting forces in Sierra Leone.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

24. Recent United Nations investigations have revealed that conditions in the camps make refugees vulnerable to sexual and other exploitation, including by armed forces and groups, other refugees, aid workers and peacekeepers, and that children and women are most at risk. The Plan of Action submitted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises calls for the incorporation into all of the Committee's codes of conduct of six core principles, one of them being the prohibition of sexual activity with persons under the age of 18, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. The Task Force has also called for better

management and delivery of humanitarian assistance, and complaint mechanisms for children and women threatened with abuse.

Progress by regional and subregional organizations or arrangements

25. In accordance with resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000) and 1379 (2001), several regional and subregional organizations or arrangements, including the Group of Eight, the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the African Union, have incorporated the children and armed conflict agenda as a priority concern into their policies and programmes. Recently, a declaration on the use of child soldiers was adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States. The Human Security Network has decided to devote particular attention to the protection of children in armed conflict and to develop concrete initiatives on advocacy and activities in collaboration with my Special Representative.

26. The initiative promoted by my Special Representative to integrate child protection concerns in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) resulted in the establishment of a Child Protection Unit in the ECOWAS secretariat in April 2002. The Unit plans to implement the Accra Declaration and Plan of Action; assess, document and harmonize child protection policy among ECOWAS member States; and encourage adherence to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and other relevant international and regional instruments. The Office of my Special Representative and the Child Protection Unit have agreed to conduct joint assessment missions in the subregion, beginning with the Mano River area.

V. Child soldiers

Preparation of the list annexed to the report

27. As requested by the Security Council, the annex to the present report contains a list of parties to armed conflict that recruit or use children in violation of the international obligations applicable to them, in situations that are on the Security Council's agenda or that may be brought to the attention of the Security Council by the Secretary-General, in accordance with Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security (resolution 1379 (2001)).

28. Factual information for the preparation of the list was sought from and verified with a wide range of sources, including entities of the United Nations system such as peace operations and country teams, international and local non-governmental organizations, and individual academics and experts. The preparation of the list posed numerous challenges; nevertheless the final product represents an important step forward in our efforts to induce compliance with international child protection obligations by parties to conflict. The Security Council is encouraged to consider the information provided in the list in its deliberations and actions on specific country situations.

29. In preparing the list it was decided to include (a) only those current armed conflict situations of which the Security Council was seized at the time of writing of the report; (b) identifiable parties to such a conflict; and (c) those parties that

continue to recruit or use children in violation of international obligations applicable to them.

30. The minimum international standard to which all Member States on the list are held is the Convention on the Rights of the Child. When appropriate, the conduct of States was also assessed in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182 concerning the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

31. The conduct of non-State armed groups was assessed in accordance with the widely accepted minimum international standard that children under age 15 shall not be conscripted or enlisted into armed forces or groups or used by them to participate actively in hostilities in either international or internal armed conflicts. This standard echoes the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and the statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In States that have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, non-State armed groups are held to that higher standard, prohibiting all recruitment and use of children under 18. Commitments made in peace agreements or to my Special Representative were also taken into account.

Parties on the list

32. Applying the above criteria to the information that has been gathered, 23 parties to conflict were found to be engaged in the recruitment or use, or both, of children in the conflicts. These 23 parties to conflict are involved in five situations of which the Security Council is seized (see S/2002/30): Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Somalia.

33. In Afghanistan, over the past 20 years of conflict, various State and non-State actors conscripted child soldiers. Following the fall of the Taliban government, there was significant demobilization of soldiers, including children. Recent reports indicate, however, that some armed groups in various parts of the country have resumed recruitment, including under-age boys. The new Afghan National Army, which is designed to replace all other armed groups, will not be employing under-age soldiers.

34. In Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, members of the United Nations country teams are working with relevant government departments, and when possible with non-State armed groups, to facilitate the demobilization of child soldiers.

35. In Burundi, the Government has requested the assistance of UNICEF to conduct a census of child soldiers and to prepare a demobilization plan; this process is currently under way.

36. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Pretoria and Luanda Agreements with the Governments of Rwanda (July 2002) and Uganda (September 2002), which support the principles laid down in the Lusaka Agreement of 1999, provide a concrete opportunity to move forward with disarmament, demobilization and

reintegration and the withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan forces, coordinated by MONUC. In May 2001, several parties appearing on the list in the Democratic Republic of the Congo made commitments to my Special Representative to refrain from recruiting children into their armed forces or groups. These same parties are also signatories to the Lusaka Agreement, which imposes a similar restriction. In addition, in November 2001, the Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, setting 18 as the age limit for all recruitment into the armed forces. A disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process for child soldiers has been initiated with the Government and RCD-Goma.

37. In Liberia, while United Nations and civil society partners are engaged in advocacy to convince the Government to acknowledge the problem of child recruitment, there are indications that renewed fighting has led to new recruitment of children by armed forces and groups.

38. In Somalia, the United Nations has limited ability to monitor recruitment or mount responsive interventions because of insecurity and lack of access. A small pilot demobilization project is under way in Mogadishu for 120 children, including 20 girls.

39. Three parties included in the list are Government armed forces, of which one is legally obliged not to recruit or enlist persons under age 18. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a party to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and has declared an age limit of 18 for voluntary enlistment in the armed forces. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is also a party to ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

(c) Situations of concern not included in the list

40. Other situations of concern with regard to recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, which are not included in the list, are described below.

Conflict situations not on the agenda of the Security Council

41. Such situations include that in Colombia, where armed groups like the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), ELN (Ejercito de Liberación Nacional) and paramilitaries AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia), AUSC (Autodefensas Unidas del Sur del Casanare) and ACCU (Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Uraba) continue their decades-long practice of recruiting boys and girls for use in combat. In Northern Ireland, paramilitaries continue to recruit and use children. In the Republic of Chechnya of the Russian Federation, insurgency groups continue to enlist children and use them to plant landmines and explosives.

42. In Myanmar, Human Rights Watch has reported that large numbers of children are forcibly recruited into the national armed forces, as well as by armed groups. Testimonies received by UNICEF confirm this. In his report to the General Assembly (A/57/290 and Corr.1), the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar expressed concern about reports of abuses on the part of armed opposition groups, notably the Karenni National Liberation Army, which is accused of forced conscription of male villagers, including under-age youths.

43. In Nepal, the United Nations country team and non-governmental organizations report forced and involuntary recruitment by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), although access to the relevant areas of the country is restricted.

44. In the Philippines, the United Nations country team reports recruitment of children by several armed groups, including the New People's Army, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front, and Abu Sayyaf.

45. In the Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has released some children since March 2001, but the number of children remaining in its ranks is unknown. The Machakos peace process should facilitate the demobilization of child soldiers.

46. In northern Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) continues to use children to fight and as sexual slaves. Some 100 children were recently released by LRA and several others escaped, but hundreds more have been abducted since April 2002, when fighting intensified in the southern Sudan and northern Uganda following the Government of Uganda's launch of Operation Iron Fist. It is believed that a large number of children remain in the ranks of LRA, while many children abducted by LRA over the last decade are still missing.

47. In Sri Lanka, the current peace negotiation under the auspices of Norway is a welcome development. The commitment made to my Special Representative by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during his visit to Sri Lanka in 1998 not to recruit or use children has been formally accepted in the current round of negotiations. Demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers from the ranks of LTTE should be accorded priority attention.

Situations on the agenda of the Security Council where conflicts have recently ended

48. Situations of which the Security Council is seized where conflicts have recently ended, and where there is no evidence of either recruitment or use of children at this time, have not been included in the list. In some situations, such as those in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Kosovo, the Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone, demobilization and/or reintegration programmes are under way.

49. Other situations where conflicts have been over for some time and peace is being consolidated, as in Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mozambique and Nicaragua, have not been included in the list. Nonetheless, the legacy of the recruitment and use of child soldiers remains and their full rehabilitation and integration is still a challenge.

Situations of conflict where children have not been recruited or used

50. My Special Representative reported after his visit to Ethiopia and Eritrea that there had been no recruitment or use of children in either country during the border conflict. This is good news and lessons should be learned from this example.

Demobilization of child soldiers

51. In Sierra Leone, education, family and community support programmes and continued monitoring are essential for more than 6,850 demobilized child ex-

combatants, 6,500 of whom have been reunited with their families. These children remain at risk of being recruited again to fight across the border in Liberia.

52. In Guinea-Bissau, since the cessation of the armed conflict two years ago, UNICEF and the United Nations Peace-building Support Office continue to work with the Government to demobilize children from the armed forces.

53. In Angola, following a ceasefire in April 2002 and progress in negotiating a permanent peace, the need for the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants is urgent. It is estimated that between 6,000 and 8,000 children under the age of 18 served in the ranks of UNITA.

54. In the Republic of the Congo, those who fought as children in armed groups, a small number of whom were recently demobilized, are considered by the United Nations country team to be at risk of being recruited again in renewed fighting. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some of the children from Bunia, who were released and reunited with their families in 2001, were reportedly recruited again in the Iturri region in North Kivu.

55. In the Great Lakes region, the World Bank and donor Governments have undertaken to provide resources ($500 million) to support the demobilization and reintegration of combatants, including child soldiers. This joint international effort — involving donors and United Nations funds and programmes — was launched by the World Bank in December 2001, in support of a regional Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme for the Greater Great Lakes Region. The Programme involves nine countries — Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe — and includes a regional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy and programme with a multi-country approach, to provide a mechanism that will allow demobilization to occur simultaneously in countries affected by regional conflicts. The World Bank and Programme partners have made a commitment to give priority to the unconditional and urgent demobilization of child soldiers.

56. Demobilization and reintegration programming is central to breaking the cycle of violence for children and the provision of adequate resources for such programming is crucial. The Security Council and Member States are urged to provide sustained and adequate resources to all relevant actors, in particular peace operations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations, engaged in implementing demobilization and reintegration programmes for children (see A/56/342-S/2001/852, action point 14).

VI. Field visits by the Special Representative

57. In the reporting period, the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict continued to advocate, raise awareness and promote as well as strengthen the protection, rights and well-being of children affected by armed conflict. Particularly important are his field visits, which provide an opportunity to systematically assess and draw significant attention to the situation of children affected by conflict and allow him to make targeted recommendations. These visits have resulted in commitments from parties to conflict and encouraged donor resources for programmatic activities for the benefit of war-affected children. In the

course of the past year, the Special Representative undertook visits to Afghanistan, Angola, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guatemala, the Northern Caucasus in the Russian Federation, and Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. With respect to situations where there are United Nations-mandated peace operations, the findings of the Special Representative are summarized below.

Ethiopia and Eritrea (March 2002)

58. The recent border war has been particularly devastating for the children and youth of Ethiopia and Eritrea, who make up a large segment of the population, and has added to the legacy of long years of war. Many children have known nothing but war and thus suffer from severe psychosocial trauma. The plight of children who are displaced and separated from their families in both countries is a matter of particular concern; thousands are still living in camps in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and thousands more in camps in Djibouti, Kenya, the eastern Sudan and Yemen or housed with host families. Displacement and loss of family members have led to an increase in the number of orphans and children living on the streets without family or community support. The extensive presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance from successive cycles of conflict is a source of grave risk to the civilian population, children in particular. Education has also been a casualty of war: many schools have been destroyed and there is a dearth of trained teachers.

59. The Special Representative called for the creation, with donor support, of conditions for the return and resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees, in particular the provision of water supply, sanitation, housing, schools, health centres, and mine action programmes. Mine awareness initiatives aimed at children and the provision of prostheses are urgently required. More attention and resources also need to be allocated to initiatives for the reunification of families and for the rehabilitation of orphans and street children. The Special Representative also called for child protection to be made an explicit objective of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), including through the establishment of the post of child protection adviser, and for children and conflict issues to be integrated into the agenda of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development so that the protection of children becomes a subregional priority.

60. The Special Representative established that there had been no systematic recruitment or use of child soldiers during the conflict in either country. Thanks to the effective organization and delivery of humanitarian assistance to displaced populations by local authorities, elders and community leaders, there were no reports of the use of food in any exploitative manner. The excellent rapport between UNMEE and the local population, resulting in effective implementation of quick-impact projects, is also commendable.

Angola (May 2002)

61. During his visit to Angola, the Special Representative found universal conviction among Angolans that the three-decade-long war had come to a definitive end, as well as widespread sentiment in favour of reconciliation and national unity — the most positive indicator of a hopeful future for Angola's children.

62. The encouraging spirit of the population was in contrast, however, to the grave humanitarian crisis. There is an urgent need for food, medicine, water and shelter,

especially for displaced persons emerging from the former UNITA-held areas. Another key challenge was the need for the immediate rehabilitation of social services that particularly benefit children, such as schools, nutritional programmes and medical centres. Special attention needs to be paid to the demobilization and reintegration of child combatants, including family reunification where possible, the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance, and mine awareness campaigns, given the high casualty rates among children.

63. In my report of 26 July 2002 to the Security Council on the situation in Angola (S/2002/834), the findings of the Special Representative during his visit to the country were highlighted. I recommended that the Council consider the deployment of a child protection adviser with the United Nations Mission in Angola in view of the magnitude of the problems associated with the rehabilitation of children and the needs of youth. The Council considered this recommendation favourably and, pursuant to resolution 1433 (2002), a child protection adviser was deployed with the Mission in October.

Afghanistan (July 2002)

64. During his visit to Afghanistan, the Special Representative was encouraged by the universal expression of relief at the emergence of peace and the remarkable signs of recovery in the places that he visited. For the children of Afghanistan to reap the benefits of peace, he proposed urgent attention to education, including rehabilitation of schools, provision of educational materials, revision of curricula and the paying of teachers. Reversing chronic malnutrition through income-generating projects and other initiatives designed to help reduce severe poverty, as well as special focus on maternal and child health, which has suffered because of the lack of access to basic health services, especially in rural areas, must be prioritized. The Special Representative found the condition of displaced children unacceptable, particularly in Spinboldak camp and the no-man's land between Afghanistan and Pakistan, where there is a lack of water, food, medical services and education and the weather conditions are extreme. He recommended that priority be accorded to the resettlement of those displaced persons, as well as sustained support for landmine clearance and mine awareness campaigns.

65. To help translate the concerns of children into national and international priority-setting, policy-making and resource allocation, the Special Representative recommended the establishment of a national commission for children. The Security Council may wish to consider my Special Representative's recommendation for the inclusion of a post of child protection adviser in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to ensure that the protection, rights and rehabilitation of children and young people are a priority in all aspects of the United Nations activities in Afghanistan.

Guatemala (February 2002)

66. The peace accords in Guatemala are the basis of lasting peace, but they have not yet been fully implemented. The Children's and Adolescents' Code providing an updated legal and institutional framework for minors has not yet been enacted into law, nor have the recommendations of the Commission for Historical Clarification on missing children been implemented or the National Commission for the Search for Disappeared Children in Guatemala officially recognized. The Special

Representative urged the Guatemalan authorities to implement these important initiatives, as well as to meet the education, health and nutrition needs of formerly displaced populations and demobilized combatants in the resettlement areas and to compensate war-affected groups, including relatives of the disappeared, widows and orphans. He also recommended that the Government accelerate the implementation of programmes to address high levels of malnutrition among children and mothers.

67. The Special Representative noted commitments made by the Government, other political leaders and civil society organizations to the peace process, in particular the President's ongoing support for children and youth. Increased resource allocations for education, health and nutrition are vital for ensuring long-term peace and stability. The positive impact of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala and the cooperation between the peace mission and the United Nations country team are also commendable.

VII. Observations

68. Since my first report to the Security Council, impressive gains have been made in codifying international norms and standards for the protection and well-being of children. As requested by the Council, a list of violators of those norms and standards is annexed to the present report, demonstrating clearly the will of the international community that those who violate the standards cannot do so with impunity. More needs to be done; there is a need to promote and disseminate these standards and norms, and to raise awareness about them on the ground. Similarly, there is a need to put in place strengthened monitoring and reporting mechanisms to identify the violators and take measures against them. Dissemination, advocacy, monitoring and reporting are the key components that an "era of application" must encompass. My Special Representative will be devoting particular attention to these issues. I also urge the members of the Security Council to reflect upon them during their deliberations.

Annex

Parties to armed conflict that recruit or use child soldiers

The situation in Afghanistan

1. Remnants of the Taliban
2. Factions associated with the former Northern Alliance
3. Factions in the south of Afghanistan

The situation in Burundi

1. Government of Burundi
2. PALIPEHUTU/FNL (Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu/Forces nationales pour la libération)
3. CNDD/FDD (Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie/Front pour la défense de la démocratie)

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
2. Mouvement national de libération du Congo (MLC)
3. Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-Goma
4. Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-National
5. Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-Kisangani/ML
6. Union des patriotes congolais (UPC) (Hema militia)
7. Masunzu's forces
8. Lendu militias
9. Ex-FAR/Interahamwe
10. Mai-Mai

The situation in Liberia

1. Government of Liberia
2. Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)

The situation in Somalia

1. Transitional National Government
2. Juba Valley Alliance
3. Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council
4. Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council — Mogadishu
5. Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA)